

Jalalabad Chance of Rain 22°C 13°C	Ghazni Partly Cloudy 14°C 3°C	Kandahar Clear 26°C 12°C	Mazar Clear 21°C 10°C	Herat Clear 22°C 9°C	Bamayan Snow 8°C -1°C	Kabul Clear 16°C 7°C
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Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam Still Supports Afghan Taliban

KABUL - A key member of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-S) led by a famous Pakistani scholar Maulana Sami-ul-Haq, declared that they support Afghan Taliban and are proud of their role, a Pakistani newspaper reported.

While delivering his speech to Tahafuz-i-Islam convention in Karak area, the JUI-S chief of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Maulana Yousaf Shah, said the leaders of the party had always raised their voice against western powers.

According to Dawn news, he said the political parties like Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had no programme to provide protection to the religion and people. Other political parties could deceive the masses through slogans of secularism, socialism and communism, but had no programme for the welfare of people.

"Very soon the religious forces would be united again for the security of Islam and against the western powers," he said adding attacks on religious schools would not be tolerated and asked the people to support the religious parties.

Over the past 15 years, Afghan officials have repeatedly asked Pakistan to stop supporting Afghan Taliban in its territory, but Pakistan has denied the allegations. Sami is considered as father of Afghan Taliban and is a key supporter of Taliban. He had several times issued Fatwa to legalize war in Afghanistan.

Political analyst, Javed Ghafoor told Pajhwok Afghan News that Taliban has been supporting by religious parties and Pakistani intelligence. They have been trained and directed in the religious seminary of Maulana Sami-ul-Haq, to carry out disruptive activities in Afghanistan, he said. (Pajhwok)

Nationwide Anti-Narcotics Plan Devised: Minister

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Counter-narcotics Minister Salamat Azizi on Thursday said her ministry was working on a plan aimed at creating cooperation to eliminate the scourge of narcotics in northern Balkh province.

During a visit to Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province, Azizi told reporters that her ministry had also devised a five-year programme named "Action" for elimination of narcotics nationwide.

She said the Action was also supported by the international community and would continue until 2019. "This programme has three objectives -- implementation of law on all people, fighting against drug workers and providing alternative income sources to farmers," she



said. Azizi expressed concern over the increasing number of drug addicts and said around three million people in Afghanistan were addicted to drugs.

She said there were very limited resources available for treatment of drug addicts. She continued some foreign drug traffickers were behind the increased

production of narcotics in Afghanistan. The international community should take more steps towards prevention of the phenomenon, Azizi said.

She said Afghan forces would help eradicate poppy farms in a number of Balkh districts.

However, provincial council member, Ibrahim Khairandish, said he did not believe the Afghan forces would eliminate all drug farms in Balkh.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News there was only one month remaining to harvest poppy crops and Afghan forces lacked equipment and workforce to eradicate them.

Khairandish asked the government to provide alternative income sources for farmers. (Pajhwok)

Karzai Welcomes HIA for Entering Talks with Govt

KABUL - Former president Hamid Karzai on Thursday welcomed the Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA)'s decision to enter peace negotiations with the Afghan government, asking the Taliban to follow suit. A statement from Karzai's media office said the former president met with the Gulbuddin Hikmatyar-led HIA delegation in Kabul on Thursday. Karzai hoped the peace negotiations would result into durable peace in Afghanistan and said the Taliban they also should join the peace process and help bring stability to the country. Few days ago, the HIA delegation headed by Eng. Amin Karim announced the party's willingness to hold talks with the High Peace Council (HPC). Karim in an interview with Pajhwok Afghan News said the HIA had no precondition for negotiations but it would never compromise Islamic principles. (Pajhwok)

Uruzgan Officials Warn Districts Could Collapse

KABUL - Uruzgan provincial council members on Friday warned that four districts in the province facing the threat of collapse.

The council members said that in the past few weeks, routes in to Trinkot, the capital of the province, have been closed and insurgent activity has increased.

Meanwhile provincial security officials accept that insecurity has increased in the province.

Deh Rawud, Khas Uruzgan, Gizab and Charcheno districts of Uruzgan have all witnessed heavy clashes recently, officials said.

The provincial council raised its concerns and said if attention is not paid to the situation, these districts will collapse to insurgents.

"The security situation is deteriorating day by day and the road to Khas Uruzgan district has been



closed for the past year, and the roads to Shaheed Asas and Deh Rawud have been closed for nearly three months - only military convoys can pass through there," said Abdul Karim Khadamzai, the provincial council head.

"Our districts are in trouble, like Shaheed Asas, Khaz Uruzgan, Chirartoo and Deh Rawud districts. Police and army are fighting but in a

Ghani Offers Condolences to Victim Families of Parwan Bombing



KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on Friday offered condolences to the victim families of those killed or wounded in recent suicide attack in the Siah Gird district of central Parwan province, his office said.

At least nine civilians were killed and 30 others wounded in the suicide attack in the Siah Gird district late on Tuesday.

In statement, President Ghani said targeting civilians is unforgettable crime and he also ordered the local officials to assist the victim families.

The governor of Parwan was also instructed by president to visit the wounded people at the hospital and to order the doctors of Parwan zonal hospital for better treatment of the injured people, the statement added. (Pajhwok)

Hayat Appointed as New Helmand Governor

KABUL - The governor of central Maidan Wardak province has been reappointed as the governor for southern Helmand province in compliance with a presidential order, an official said on Thursday. The president decreed the appointment of Hayatullah Hayat as governor of Helmand province after being recommended by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG).

Hayat replaces Miza Khan Rahimi who had been the governor of Helmand governor for the past one year.

Hayat confirmed his appointment as new Helmand governor to Pajhwok Afghan News and said he hoped Maidan Wardak would also get a new governor to lead the provincial affairs. (Pajhwok)

For NATO Trainers, Race against Time to Prepare Afghan Troops to Go it Alone



KABUL - Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Chung, leading a team of U.S. advisers in Helmand province to help train the Afghan army's embattled 215th Corps, knows he does not have much time.

If Washington sticks to its schedule for withdrawing troops, by the time his tour ends in November, the NATO training mission in Afghanistan will be nearing its end, despite local forces struggling to fight the Taliban insurgency alone.

"There is still much work to do," said Chung, a veteran of several Afghan tours, speaking at Sorab base, a dusty expanse of blast walls and wire fences in Helmand.

"You have to adjust your expectations," he told Reuters during a recent visit to the base in the southern province, where Taliban militants, bent on overthrowing the government and driving out foreign forces, made major gains in recent months.

Corruption and issues like irregular leave due to heavy fighting and pay have undermined efficiency and hurt mo-

rale among local troops. He has seen progress since arriving in February but remains realistic: "We understand we're not going to be able to fix all that."

As things stand, U.S. forces in Afghanistan are due to be nearly halved to 5,500 from the current level of 9,800 by the start of 2017. At that level, U.S. officials say the training mission would not be able to continue.

But the timetable is coming under scrutiny, as the new U.S. commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan conducts a review of security before making recommendations to Washington some time in June.

General John Nicholson recently told Reuters that heavy fighting and casualties in 2015 had meant the training mission was behind schedule.

NATO commanders say big strides have been made by fledgling Afghan security forces, built virtually from scratch since the Taliban was toppled from power in 2001.

But the sharp escalation in casualties and territorial losses in 2015, the first year Afghan forces ... (More on P4)...(13)

UN Agencies to Repair Damaged Schools, Clinics in Nangarhar

JALALABAD - United Nations (UN) secretary general's special deputy representative for Afghanistan Mark Bowden on Thursday said the world's body would help reconstruct damaged hospital and school buildings in conflict-hit areas of eastern Nangarhar province.

The envoy made the pledge during a meeting with Governor Salim Khan Kunduzi here. UNAMA provincial chief and heads of RCO, OHCHR, UNMAS, FAO, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNOPS, WFP,



UNODC, UN women, IOM, UNHCR, UN Habitat, UNFPA, and UNESCO were also present at the meeting.

Kunduzi's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani told Pajhwok Afghan News UN agencies' heads had also pledged assistance to the rehabilitation effort.

He said the governor asked UN officials to monitor the repair ... (More on P4)...(12)

7 Senior Education Officials Face Corruption Charges

KABUL - Seven high ranking officials of the Ministry of Education have been arrested for allegedly embezzling 26 million afghanis in the construction of two hostels, officials said.

Brig. Gen. Abdul Ghayor Andarabi, crimes department head at the Ministry of Interior, told a press conference here that they had obtained evidence about the detainees' involvement in the embezzlement.

He said the accused had stolen at least 26 million afghanis from the funds for



the construction of the two hostels (one for boys and another for girls) in Darul Aman locality of Kabul. Both the buildings had similar specifications, but one was given to the contractor for 45 million af and the second for 71 million af, he said, adding the Ministry of Interior had been investigating the matter over the past one month ... (More on P4)...(14)

17,000 Afghans Studying in Iranian Universities, Mohaqiq Informed



KABUL - Around 17,000 Afghans are currently studying in Iranian universities, a manifestation of deep commonalities between the neighbours, an official of Ministry of Science, Research and Technology has said.

Samad Haj Jabbari, in a meeting with Deputy Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Mohaqiq in Kerman on Wednesday, hoped promoting scientific knowledge in neighbouring countries would help establish long-term security.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Jabbari as saying the large number of Afghan students in his country reflected cultural and religious bonds between the two countries.

A wholesome lifestyle and low cost of living in Iran were the main attraction for foreign students to study in his country, the official said, acknowledging Afghan students played a significant role in cultural events in Iran. (Pajhwok)

Afghan Refugees Struggle To Find Work

KABUL - Among the thousands of Afghan refugees that have made it to Germany, very few have found work. One of the few Afghan refugees to find work is Yar Mohammad Haqyar, who works for a German construction company as a painter. He said he was pleased to have found a job although he is still waiting to have his asylum application granted.

"I came from Afghanistan to Germany, because there is a war in Afghanistan for 70 years. You can have a good life in Germany. Now I've found a job and I find the work very interesting and I would like to stay in this job," Haqyar said.

The construction company officials meanwhile said they were happy to employ a migrant.

"I decided to take on a migrant because I wanted to give him a chance to get integrated into the labor market," said the head of the construction company, Anita Brunner. But not all asylum seekers have been so lucky in Germany.

Betram Brossardt, Managing Director of the Bavarian Industry Association said that of those he has tried to place, jobs ... (More on P4)...(15)